

**Manpower & Organization**

**SUGGESTION PROGRAM**

\*This instruction implements Department of Defense (DoD) 1400.25-M, *DoD Civilian Personnel Manual*, Subchapter 451, "Awards", December 1996. It gives the directive requirements for the Air National Guard Suggestion Program. This instruction applies to all Air National Guard (ANG) military and competitive technicians, active military members including Traditional Guardsmen, and the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) members. ANG Title 5 and Title 10 employees fall under the Air Force IDEA (Innovative Development through Employee Awareness) Program and should submit their ideas through their servicing area manpower idea office.

**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS**

\*This revision allows changes from Air Force Center for Quality and Management Innovation (AFCQMI) to Air Force Management Innovation Agency (AFMIA) and AFLSA/JACP to HQ USAF/JACP. It adds supervisor's responsibility to complete Job Responsibility Determination (JRD) on all stand-alone suggestions; provides clarification on the use of publicity; and adds processing time limit for State SPMs. This revision also updates confirmatory and after-the-fact suggestion criteria; provides clarification of awarding AFTO Forms 22; adds new criteria for uniform changes; adds criteria for Scientific Achievements and Invention and Patent eligibility and processing.

An (\*) indicates revision from the previous edition.

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## Chapter 1

### GENERAL

**1.1. Purpose.** This instruction prescribes policies and procedures for administering and managing the ANG Suggestion Program. It also gives instructions on the submission and eligibility of suggestions, explains evaluation and disposition procedures, and provides guidance for the payment of awards. The use of either masculine or feminine pronouns is intended to include both genders. Awards are based on the merits of the contribution and benefits that accrue without regard to race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, physical handicap, age, political affiliation, or union membership affiliation or participation. Supplementation of this regulation and establishment of local forms are prohibited without prior approval from the ANG, Directorate of Plans and Programs, Manpower and Organization Division, Management Engineering Branch (ANG/XPME). Supplements will not change the intent of the governing instruction.

#### 1.2. Responsibilities:

1.2.1. The Chief, National Guard Bureau. The Chief, National Guard Bureau is responsible for the overall administration, improvement, and evaluation of the National Guard Suggestion Program. This responsibility has been delegated to ANG/XPME for ANG suggestions.

1.2.2. Air National Guard. The ANG/XPME SPM interprets policy and provides guidance to the states'/territories' Human Resources Office (HRO) SPMs. The ANG SPM ensures that the states/territories uniformly apply suggestion policy. Award packages that exceed ANG award approval authority are prepared and forwarded through the Director of the Air National Guard to HQ Air Force, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs (HQ USAF/XP). The ANG SPM develops appropriate supplements, policies, and plans; conducts training workshops; decides disputed cases and reports their decisions to management; and reviews direct inquiries from suggesters.

1.2.3. State Adjutant Generals. The State Adjutant Generals are responsible for assuring compliance with program requirements, establishing a State Incentive (Suggestion) Awards Committee, promoting and supporting the Suggestion Program, and ensuring that prompt action is taken on awards.

\*1.2.4. Unit Commanders. Unit Commanders budget for and ensure that the unit promptly pays suggestion awards, designate a Suggestion Program Manager, and establish procedures to verify that their unit implements suggestions.

1.2.5. HRO SPMs. State SPMs administer and publicize the Suggestion Program; provide advice, assistance, and training to supervisors on the effective use and participation in the program; provide training and/or orientation to all technicians and military members on how to submit suggestions; ensure that all suggesters are kept informed of the status of their suggestion; determine requirements for evaluations and ensure that evaluation is performed within prescribed time limits; and ensure that all suggestions meet eligibility requirements.

1.2.6. Functional Offices of Primary Responsibility (OPR). OPRs receive, control, and evaluate suggestions.

\*1.2.7. Supervisors. Encourages employees to participate in the program and, if requested, assists in the development of suggestions whenever possible. Ensures multiple AFTO Forms 22 related to a single improvement are consolidated and processed as a single confirmatory suggestion. Determines suggester's job responsibility status on stand-alone suggestions.

1.2.8. Suggestion Awards Committee. This committee is established at the State HRO's discretion. The Suggestion Awards Committee includes a chairperson, alternate chairperson, military and civilian members from major functional areas, nonvoting technical advisors (as required), and the HRO SPM, who serves as the executive secretary. The committee reviews all suggestions, inventions, and scientific achievements that require a decision on the final award, and when requested, assists the HRO SPM in resolving problem cases and disputed decisions.

**\*1.3. Publicity.** Advertise the program frequently by:

\*1.3.1. Preparing news releases on innovative, high impact ideas for publication by local public affairs offices.

\*1.3.2. Making people aware of the program by presentations at commander's call, newcomers' briefings, orientations, and staff meetings.

\*1.3.3. Publicizing the location of the Suggestion Office in the unit bulletin and unit newspapers.

\*1.3.4. Displaying slogans on posters.

\*1.3.5. Publishing articles about suggestions of merit in bulletins, unit, local area, and hometown newspapers, and other periodicals.

\*1.3.6. Purchasing and distributing promotional items that are not personal items to encourage participation.

\*1.3.7. Using organizational home page and internet web page.

## Chapter 2

### DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY AND SUBMITTING SUGGESTIONS

**2.1. Suggestion Eligibility Criteria.** Any individual, team, or group within the ANG may submit a suggestion. An idea does not become a suggestion until a person submits it on an AF Form 1000, **Idea Application**, and it meets the following criteria:

2.1.1. A suggestion must outline a specific area for improvement, state a workable solution, and incorporate expected benefits.

\*2.1.2. A suggestion must be the suggester's own thoughts or a new application of an old principle. It may be within the submitter's job responsibility and may be a patented idea, invention, or scientific achievement.

2.1.3. Suggesters must sign the AF Form 1000, agreeing that the US Government may use their suggestions, once awarded, without incurring further claims by suggesters, their heirs, or any other persons.

2.1.4. Suggestions are ineligible if they are vague, incomplete, deal with generalities or opinions, or appear to be a personal complaint or criticism.

**2.2. Submitting Suggestions.** Suggesters submit and SPMs process all suggestions in English.

2.2.1. Group Suggestions. There is no limit to the number of co-suggesters as long as each co-suggester dates and signs the AF Form 1000. After the Suggestion Office accepts a suggestion, a co-suggester may only be added or deleted if all co-suggesters give their consent in writing.

2.2.1.1. Designate one suggester as the "primary contact," who keeps other co-suggesters informed.

\*2.2.1.2. Suggestions originating from team efforts (Total Quality Management, Process Action Teams, etc.) follow group suggestion procedures in this paragraph and include the statement "This is a result of a team effort." If all members of the team agree that the submission is one person's idea, then all members must sign a statement to that effect.

\*2.2.2. Confirmatory and After-the-Fact Suggestions. The term "confirmatory" refers to all separate improvement process documents, which establish ownership and identify tangible savings/intangible benefits on the form. All suggestions that affect a Technical Order must be processed as an AFTO Form 22, **Technical Manual (TM) Change Recommendation and Reply**, before attaching a suggestion. All issues must be resolved before submitting a suggestion with the approved form. AFTO Forms 22 and 135, **Source, Maintenance, and Recoverability Code Change Request**, meet the requirements for confirmatory and must be submitted as such. The term "after-the-fact" refers to ideas which are presented formally or informally to management prior to submission of an AF Form 1000 and for which the separate improvement process documents do **not** establish ownership or identify tangible savings or intangible benefits on the form. The AF Form 1000 must be submitted within 30 days of receipt. All other separate improvement processes, such as the AF Form 1067, **Modification Proposal**, the AF Form 1046, **Zero Overpricing Challenges/Referrals**, and the AF Form 847, **Recommendation for Change of Publications (Flight Publications)**, will be considered after-the-fact suggestions until such time as they meet the criteria for confirmatory suggestions.

\*2.2.2.1. Suggesters may request waivers to the 30-day confirmatory time limit. The request must be in writing to the SPM and identify the person to whom the proposal was made. Suggesters must provide the reason they were unable to submit an AF Form 1000 within 30 days. Lack of knowledge of the confirmatory requirement is not justification for a waiver. There is no waiver for an after-the-fact separate improvement process.

\*2.2.2.2. Processing Confirmatory Suggestions. Approved separate improvement process forms may be attached to an AF Form 1000 for recognition through the Air National Guard Suggestion Program. The AF Form 1000 must be submitted within 30 days of date of approval of the separate improvement process document. Specific guidance for submitting an AFTO Form 22 is found in T.O. 00-5-1 and guidance for submitting an AFTO Form 135 is found in T.O. 00-25-195. Since ownership and benefits have already been determined, no evaluation (AF Form 1000-1, **Idea Evaluation and Transmittal**) is required.

\*2.2.2.3. Processing After-the-Fact Suggestions. An AF Form 1000 may be submitted for determination of savings/benefits and recognition through the Air National Guard Suggestion Program. The AF Form 1000 must be submitted within 30 days of notification of approval of the separate improvement process document. When processing a suggestion to an approved separate improvement process, an AF Form 1000-1 need not be completed. Consult the governing regulation of the separate improvement process to ensure that recommended changes go through proper channels. A suggestion that modifies any aircraft system or equipment or any communications-electronic equipment must be processed through the AF Form 1067 process first before submission of an AF Form 1000 for the savings/benefits.

\*2.3. **Uniform Change Suggestions.** (Refer to AFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel*). Must meet all the following criteria:

\*2.3.1. Must be a new suggestion.

\*2.3.2. Must not have been reviewed by a previous board. Evaluators must review minutes of previous board to determine this.

\*2.3.3. Must be recommended for approval by both the installation commander and the Adjutant General prior to forwarding to ANG/XPME for evaluation.

**2.4. Requesting Status.** Request information about the status of a suggestion from the HRO SPM maintaining the suggestion case file.

\*2.5. **Retaining Ownership Rights.** Ownership is determined by the first suggestion/idea to reach the final approval authority. The suggester retains ownership of a suggestion for 1 year after final approval/disapproval action. When a suggestion is withdrawn, the suggester does not retain the 1-year ownership allowed by this paragraph.

\*2.6. **Requesting Reconsideration or Reevaluation.** The suggester must submit a written request for reconsideration or reevaluation to the HRO SPM before ownership rights have expired. This request must include additional evidence; new material, information, or rationale; a new approach; or clarification of significant issues or questions (disagreement with the evaluation is not justification). This request may be submitted any time during the 1-year ownership period. A new ownership period begins when a suggestion is reopened. When ownership expires, the same idea may be submitted as a new suggestion.

2.6.1. Any office in the evaluation channel may request further review when a higher level evaluator has misinterpreted, overlooked something, or been vague in the first review. These reevaluations are initiated by, but not limited to, evaluators, SPMs, or quality control representatives.

\*2.6.2. Requests for reconsideration may be submitted only after notification of final approval or disapproval of the suggestion. For group ideas, only the primary contact may submit requests for reconsideration. Requests are limited to one per suggestion. Only one request for reconsideration will be accepted. If an SPM refers a suggester's request for reconsideration, an evaluator one level above the previous evaluator (within the same OPR function) who made the final decision will do the reevaluation. There should be a new evaluator signing the evaluation in response to the reconsideration request. For confirmatory suggestions, requests for reconsideration of the award will not be accepted. The submitter of the separate improvement process must resolve tangible savings/intangible benefits with the evaluator of the separate improvement process prior to submitting the suggestion.

2.6.3. When an OPR has disapproved a suggestion but later reexamines and implements the idea within the suggester's 1-year ownership, the OPR completes an evaluation and credits the suggester. If the OPR acted because of directives from higher authority, the suggester cannot be credited, but the suggester is advised why.

2.6.4. When a previous disapproval of a suggestion is reversed within the ownership period, the evaluator or responsible official must make sure the appropriate suggester is credited even if there is no request to do so.

**\*2.7. Scientific Achievement Eligibility Criteria.** The scientific or technological achievement must be based on an act, deed, or accomplishment and meet one or more of the following criteria:

\*2.7.1. Establishes scientific or technological basis for improvements of military or other national significance.

\*2.7.2. Is of such quality and effectiveness that it materially advances the research and development of a Government activity, group, project, or service to the public.

\*2.7.3. Contributes materially to the welfare of the armed services.

\*2.7.4. An article published in a nationally recognized scientific publication (for example, *Abstract of New Technology*) that substantially contributes to scientific knowledge.

\*2.7.5. A technical paper presented to a professional society that substantially contributes to scientific knowledge.

\*2.7.6. Nominations based upon in-house reports or memos are not eligible for processing as scientific achievements.

\*2.7.7. In accordance with Federal Personnel Manual (FPM), Chapter 451, Jan 97 or superseding documents, job responsibility is not an issue for scientific achievements.

**\*2.8. Submitting Scientific Achievements.** Submit scientific achievements through the ANG Suggestion Program within 90 days after the specific presentation or date of publication, but not both.

\*2.8.1. To ensure verification of the achievement, the submitter will provide the Responsible Official/Supervisor a copy of the article or, if it is too voluminous, the cover page showing the actual name of the publication and the publication's date.

\*2.8.2. If the article was presented at a professional society, the nomination should include the name of the society, date of presentation, and a copy of the itinerary of the proceedings to verify presentation.

\*2.8.3. The award for a scientific achievement, either presentation or publication is based on intangible benefits.

## Chapter 3

### EVALUATION PROCEDURES

**3.1. Evaluating Suggestions.** Evaluators complete an AF Form 1000-1 for each evaluation.

3.1.1. Both the evaluator and responsible official must sign the form.

3.1.2. To approve or disapprove a suggestion, the responsible official must have the authority to implement the suggestion.

**3.2. Meeting Total Processing Time.** Each evaluation level establishes controls to meet the following evaluation processing times (treat suggestion evaluations like any other suspended correspondence).

3.2.1. Unit Level. Total processing time must not exceed 30 calendar days. Unit processing time starts when the unit SPM receives the suggestion and ends when the SPM notifies the submitter that the suggestion is approved, in concurrent (approval pending implementation) status, being forwarded to a higher authority, or disapproved.

\*3.2.2. HRO Level. Total processing time must not exceed 10 calendar days. HRO processing time starts when the State SPM receives the suggestion package and ends on the date the State SPM refers the package to the ANG level SPM for higher level evaluation. When the suggestion package is returned to the HRO for final processing, total processing time of the award or disapproval must not exceed 10 calendar days.

\*3.2.3. ANG Level. Total processing time must not exceed 30 calendar days. ANG processing time starts when the ANG SPM forwards the suggestion to the ANG OPR and ends on the date the ANG SPM sends the approval, concurrent (approval pending implementation) status, or disapproval to the State SPM, or refers the suggestion to an Air Force MAJCOM for higher level evaluation.

\*3.2.4. ANG suggestions disapproved at unit level or ANG level will not be forwarded to AFMIA/MIPP for evaluation by other Air Force MAJCOMS.

\*3.2.5. If a suggestion requires extensive study, testing, etc., the HRO SPM or ANG SPM may grant extensions to complete the evaluation. The organization responsible for the study or test must provide the SPM rationale for the extension and an estimated completion date on or prior to the processing times established by this instruction. The ANG SPM will notify the HRO SPM and the HRO SPM will notify the suggester.

### **3.3. Evaluator Administration.** The evaluator should:

3.3.1. Check every suggestion for duplication before evaluating it. Since the suggester retains ownership of an idea for 1 year following the final action, the date for determining duplication is the date the first suggestion is received by the OPR at each organizational level, not the date the suggestion was introduced into suggestion channels. If the suggestion duplicates a proposal already under consideration by management, provide a description and the date management initiated the action. Use an AF Form 1000-1 to return any duplicates.

3.3.2. Maintain a workable history file for checking duplications, set up a suggestion file and keep it for 1 year following final action. The physical location of a file is left to the OPR's discretion.

3.3.2.1. If a suggestion indicates the same problem as an earlier suggestion but contributes a different solution, it is not a duplicate and should be evaluated on its own merits. If the solution you adopt combines the proposals of more than one suggestion, base the evaluation of benefits on the respective portions of each individual suggestion.

3.3.2.2. There may be cases when more than one suggestion is received that concerns a similar, particular problem or situation. If they propose different solutions, the suggestion that provides the adopted solution should be approved. In your evaluation, show how the suggestion corrected the problem. Give suggestions without usable solutions an evaluation stating why they were not adopted. Failure to provide sufficient explanation could result in a request for reevaluation by a disgruntled suggester.

3.3.3. Contact the suggester for clarification or additional information, when needed. Suggestions received with incomplete or technical inaccuracies must be corrected by the suggester promptly. The suggester may help by gathering additional data and by preparing separate forms or formats. However, the suggester should never be permitted to write or make direct input to the evaluation.

3.3.4. Request inputs from other concerned functional areas.

3.3.5. Be sure to complete an AF Form 1000-1 every time you evaluate a suggestion. Strive to be brief, objective, and factual. However, if the suggestion is complex, include all essential facts necessary to support your evaluation.

3.3.5.1. Address the form to the OPR required to take further action and return the entire file through the functional point of contact to the SPM.

\*3.3.5.2. Make sure the evaluator and responsible official sign the AF Form 1000-1 and include the evaluator's DSN telephone number and e-mail address.

3.3.5.3. Require the OPR at each organizational level to include in his or her comments to an evaluation (which indicates approval, disapproval, or other recommended action) enough information to help the final evaluator make a decision. A statement that the suggestion has merit without rationale to support it is an incomplete evaluation.

3.3.5.4. Emphasize the necessity for meaningful, complete, and accurate evaluations.

3.3.5.4.1. Compute tangible savings for your entire organization or unit. Give detailed computations for old and new methods. Separate the man-hour savings from other savings reported. Remember, tangible savings are measurable and should stand the test of verification when required. Man-hour savings must be documented; i.e., will eliminate manpower authorizations or reduce and/or eliminate documented overtime or backlog. If man-hour savings cannot be documented, then they become intangible benefits.

3.3.5.4.2. Give the source used for figures reported (supply documents, office records, etc.). If feasible, furnish a copy. Figures may be based on estimates if the basis for the estimate is provided.

3.3.5.4.3. Do not include any cost associated with conducting the evaluation. Do not use printing costs for publications.

3.3.5.4.4. If intangible benefits are used, give a brief explanation of the intangible benefits noted on the AF Form 1000-1, item 4.B.

3.3.6. Do not disapprove any suggestion because:

3.3.6.1. The suggestion is job-related. Don't be concerned with the job responsibility of the suggester. That is addressed separately from the evaluation process.

3.3.6.2. You feel that the suggestion channel is inappropriate because there may be another prescribed way to submit a particular idea; for example, a technical order change, supply procedure change, civil engineering work orders, or safety improvement. Even though other management programs have forms or procedures to report corrections or changes, the Air National Guard Suggestion Program interfaces with all of them. It supports voluntary submission of ideas that can improve any Government function.

3.3.6.3. There is an existing directive that outlines current procedures. A directive may be changed as a result of an approved suggestion. If approval or disapproval of a proposed change is not authorized at your level, forward an evaluation with your comments and recommendations to the next higher OPR.

3.3.7. Implementation of the suggestion is the responsibility of the approving authority. Implement approved suggestions according to the following:

3.3.7.1. When written confirmation of implementation is received. **NOTE:** An AF Form 1000-1 may be used for interim as well as final response.

3.3.7.2. If the suggestion can be used at other organizations or bases, the suggestion should be considered for mandatory use at each level of evaluation to make sure maximum benefits will be realized. If the suggested idea does not warrant mandatory adoption, it may be adopted for optional use. Optionally adopted ideas are sent, in writing, to users by the OPR.

#### **\*3.4. Determining Job Responsibility.**

\*3.4.1. The reporting official/supervisor is responsible for making this determination (see definition in paragraph 4.7.). A JRD statement must be completed on all stand-alone suggestions.

\*3.4.2. If suggester disagrees with the determination, a request for reconsideration may be submitted in accordance with paragraph 2.6.

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## **Chapter 4**

### **AUTHORITY TO GRANT AWARDS**

**4.1. Awards Approval Authority.** State Adjutant Generals may approve cash awards up to and including \$3,000 for locally adopted suggestions only resulting in tangible/intangible benefits or a combination of both. These awards will be reviewed by the State Incentive Awards Program Committee for mathematical accuracy and compliance with this regulation. Cash awards for locally approved suggestions in excess of \$3,000 will be sent to ANG/XPME with a recommendation for the additional award.

4.1.1. Awards for approved suggestions that have been evaluated beyond the State level will be returned to the State by ANG/XPME with authority for full payment. All cash awards must be accompanied with an NGB Form 50, **Award Certificate**, or other suitable Award Certificate.

4.1.2. The amount of a cash award approved by the State Adjutant General must be determined based on the savings/benefits derived.

4.1.3. The Chief, National Guard Bureau, is authorized to approve cash awards up to and including \$10,000 (individual or group), inclusive of awards granted at the State level.

**Table 4.1. Authority to Approve Awards.**

R U L E	A	B
	If the total amount of the award for tangible savings, intangible benefits, or combined benefits is	Then the approving authority is
1	Not more than \$10,000	ANG level

**4.2. Meeting Eligibility for Cash Awards:**

\*4.2.1. All Title 32 military members and Federal civilian employees paid from appropriated funds are eligible for cash awards.

4.2.2. Military and Federal civilian retirees are eligible if they submitted their suggestions prior to their retirement date.

**4.3. Granting Cash Awards.** Grant cash awards under the following conditions:

4.3.1. ANG or Air Force implements the suggestion or the OPR provides written certification that the suggestion will be implemented on a specific date.

4.3.2. If the suggestion is implemented locally, you may consider an award for the local tangible savings or intangible benefits. Consider an additional award if ANG or the Air Force implements the suggestion at a higher level for wider application.

4.3.3. If ANG or Air Force adopts a suggestion in part or the suggestion causes action to be taken, you may consider, for award, the part that contributed to the action. The evaluation must state to what extent the suggestion contributed to the action.

4.3.4. The cash award should be based only on savings to operations and activities supported by appropriated funds. However, you may pay an award when a suggestion saves resources or improves safety conditions of non-appropriated fund activities. The cash award should be based on the final suggestion evaluation.

\*4.3.5. Approved AFTO Forms 22 "Corrections" will receive a \$100 award and "Improvements" will receive a \$200 award unless tangible savings have been noted. **NOTE:** There are no tangible savings with "Corrections."

\*4.3.6. Suggestions, which result in direct savings to a contractor, are not eligible for cash awards. **NOTE:** Suggestions that alter contracts and result in tangible savings or intangible benefits to the Government are eligible for cash awards.

\*4.3.7. Do not grant suggestion cash awards for contributions that have been recognized by another cash award. **EXCEPTION:** The recipient of an invention or patent award is eligible to earn a cash suggestion award for the same achievement. Cases when a suggestion is identified in an employee's annual performance report will not preclude an individual from receiving a cash award under the ANG Suggestion Program.

\*4.3.8. The ANG SPM may consider an adopted ZOP challenge for a cash award. The ZOP case file will include annual demand or consumption rates, old and new prices to validate savings or anticipated savings, and the scope of use (Air Force- or DoD-wide). **NOTE:** When possible, obtain tangible savings; otherwise, an intangible award will be given. The ANG SPM may use a validated ZOP case file as management's verification if unable to compute accurate one-year tangible savings. The SPM will base award payment on intangible benefits and close the case file. The ANG SPM will base the cash award on intangible benefits when ZOP is a result of an error in documentation.

**4.4. Award Types.** Recognition may be either a monetary or a non-monetary award, but may not be a time-off award. All cash awards are subject to applicable tax rules. Awards differ according to job responsibility of suggester.

**4.4.1. Individual Suggester:**

\*4.4.1.1. Tangible Savings. Award will be 15 percent of estimated first-year savings, total award will be no more than \$10,000.

\*4.4.1.2. Intangible Benefits. Award will be \$200 (limited to one award per approved suggestion). **EXCEPTION:** AFTO Forms 22 "Corrections" will receive \$100.

4.4.2. Multiple (Team/Group) Suggesters. If an individual declines a share of the award, that share will be subtracted from the total award.



\*4.4.2.1. Tangible Savings. Award will be 15 percent of estimated first-year savings, total award will be no more than \$10,000. Suggesters will share equally in total award. EXCEPTION: Co-suggesters will receive no less than \$25 each.

\*4.4.2.2. Intangible Benefits. Award will be \$200 per approved submission, shared equally by co-suggesters. Exception in paragraph 4.4.1.2.1. does not apply to an intangible benefits award. EXCEPTION: AFTO Forms 22 "Corrections" will receive \$100.

4.4.3. Suggestions determined to be within job responsibility (see paragraph 4.7. for definition).

4.4.3.1. Tangible Savings. Award will be 3 percent of estimated first-year savings. (The suggestion must save a minimum of \$20,000; award will be based on entire savings, not the amount exceeding \$20,000). Minimum award is \$600 and maximum award is \$10,000. Consider a non-monetary award for any intangible benefits.

4.4.3.2. Intangible benefits. Non-monetary award.

**\*4.5. Paying Awards.** Pay cash awards for suggestions only for actual improvements and benefits to the Government. Apply awards payment scales equally to all who are eligible for cash awards. To calculate savings and benefits or award payment, always round up to the nearest dollar. Finance awards from the Operations and Maintenance Fund to which the individual was assigned at the time the suggestion was submitted. Federal Regulation 5 C.F.R. 451.103(c)(1) requires funding to be available for paying suggestion awards. Use a SF 50-B to pay technicians and a SF 1034 to pay AGRs and Traditional Guardsmen. Do not pay an award before the final evaluation is approved. You cannot recover an award that is erroneously paid because of management error.

4.5.1. If you know an adopted suggestion will be used for less than a full year, base the amount of the award on the savings and benefits that will accrue during the period of actual use.

4.5.2. Except as described in paragraph 4.5., compute savings based on the estimated net savings for the first year of operation. When the improvement has a significant up-front investment (50 percent of first-year savings) but will yield tangible savings for more than 1 year, compute the cash award based on an average annual net savings for 3 years or less unless there is documented evidence of longer life expectancy.

\*4.5.3. Processing Invention and Patent Awards. An invention will not be accepted as a suggestion until HQ USAF/JACP has processed it and award payment has been determined for the invention.

\*4.5.3.1. Completion of AF Form 1279, **Disclosure and Record of Invention**, and AF Form 1280, **Invention Rights Questionnaire**, are required, and may be obtained from HQ USAF/JACP (Patent Division), Office of the Judge Advocate General, Washington D.C. 20324-1000.

\*4.5.3.2. HQ USAF/JACP processes each invention in accordance with AFI 51-303, *Intellectual Property - Patents, Patent Related Matters, Trademarks and Copyrights*, and then recommends the following to AFMIA:

\*4.5.3.2.1. An application award of \$100 to each inventor under the following circumstances:

\*4.5.3.2.1.1. After an application for a patent or Statutory Invention Registration (SIR) is filed on the invention, when the invention was made under circumstances that give the Government at least a license under the invention according to EO 10096, amended by EO 10930.

\*4.5.3.2.1.2. When an inventor voluntarily consents to grant a nonexclusive, irrevocable, and royalty-free license on the invention to the Government with power to grant licenses for all Government purposes.

\*4.5.3.2.2. A patent or SIR award of \$300 (to be shared equally when the invention is made by two or more eligible joint inventors), upon the issuance of a patent or SIR covering the evaluated invention.

\*4.5.3.3. When an inventor accepts an award, the inventor agrees the use of the invention by the US Government shall not form the basis of further claim of any nature upon the Government. The acceptance of an invention award does not preclude the consideration of an award for a suggestion or a scientific achievement.

#### **4.6. Processing Awards Based on Tangible Savings:**

\*4.6.1. The OPR must document manpower or work-hour savings to show that the suggestion will eliminate manpower authorizations or will save work-hours by reducing or eliminating documented overtime or work backlog.

4.6.1.1. A reduction in time to complete a task that will not reduce manning or overtime does not qualify as tangible savings.

\*4.6.1.2. To support an award based on tangible savings, the OPR must obtain confirmation of manpower resource savings from the manpower officials responsible for the applicable manpower standard containing the processes recommended for change.. Manpower resource savings are based on "authorized" grades. ANG manpower standards will be adjusted to capture the approved processes change and manpower resource savings. When contracts are affected, the administrative contracting officer will act as a validating official for manpower or work-hour savings incurred by a contractor.

4.6.2. If available, use unit-labor costs or an estimate using average cost center labor rates to compute work-hour savings. Include in all labor rates the leave and other personnel benefit costs as shown for civilian and military personnel in AFI 65-503, *US Air Force Cost and Planning Factors*. Base standard rates for calculating military work-hour savings on an 8-hour day. Do not include overhead costs.

\*4.6.3. When a suggestion is adopted for optional use or as an alternate method, compute the award based on intangible benefits. EXCEPTION: If another unit implements the suggestion, base the award on total validated tangible savings or intangible benefits. The implementing OPR may survey other bases with like equipment or procedures to determine actual benefits. If tangible savings cannot be quantified, the approved suggestion will be determined to have intangible benefits. When tangible savings cannot be quantified, the significance of the approved suggestion must be stated in the text.

**\*4.7. Job Responsibility Determination.** The reporting official/supervisor determines job responsibility based on the merits of each suggestion. If any of the statements below apply, then it is within job responsibility.

\*4.7.1. If a suggestion can be implemented by an individual (suggester), without approval of higher authority, including the reporting official/supervisor, the action is considered to be within job responsibility.

4.7.2. If the suggester's primary responsibility is to make recommendations on the subject matter contained in the suggestion, the action is considered to be within job responsibility.

4.7.3. If a suggestion is developed by a team/group and can be implemented without approval of higher authority, or if the team has been officially chartered, in writing, to make recommendations on the subject matter contained in the suggestion, the action is considered to be within job responsibility.

\*4.7.4. As a general rule, if not addressed above, suggestions from unit level that must be approved and implemented at command or higher level *normally* are not job responsibility. The same rationale applies for command personnel when approval authority is at Headquarters Air Force or higher.

\*4.7.5. All other suggestions are considered to be outside job responsibility.

#### **4.8. Processing Contributions and Awards by Other DoD Components or Federal Agencies:**

4.8.1. Air National Guard personnel may receive cash awards from other DoD components or Government agencies. These components or agencies evaluate Air National Guard contributions on the same basis and by the same standards applied to contributions from their personnel.

4.8.1.1. When more than one DoD component or Federal agency adopts a suggestion, benefiting agencies fund their pro rata share of the total award. ANG/XPME will obtain benefits derived by each agency.

4.8.1.1.1. ANG/XPME prorates the award, advises each adopting component of its award obligation, and furnishes the fund citation to the HRO SPM.

4.8.1.1.2. After receiving determination of the Air National Guard share of the award, follow normal award procedures. The HRO SPM must process the award for all shares.

4.8.1.2. When another DoD component or Federal agency adopts a suggestion from an Air National Guard participant, the benefiting DoD component or other Federal agency funds the award.

4.8.1.3. The suggester's agency makes the job responsibility determination.

\*4.8.2. The Air National Guard may also pay other DoD or Federal personnel for suggestions that help its operation. If a DoD or Federal agency suggestion has Air National Guard-wide application, pay the award from funds available to ANG. ANG/XPME arranges for payment of these awards. If it primarily benefits a particular ANG unit, pay the award from funds available to that unit.

**4.9. Requesting Award Reconsideration.** The suggester must send a written request for award reconsideration and the HRO SPM must receive that request before the 1-year ownership period expires. The reconsideration request must contain reasons for the review. The HRO SPM will accept only one award reconsideration per suggestion. Since one year is ample time to prepare a reconsideration, only one request will be accepted.

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## Chapter 5

### AIR NATIONAL GUARD SUGGESTION AWARDS COMMITTEE

#### 5.1. Responsibilities:

5.1.1. Responsibilities are established at the State HRO's discretion. The HRO SPM serves as the executive secretary, but is not a voting member.

5.1.2. Responsibilities should be made by ANG personnel for ANG suggestions.

\*5.1.3. Include reviewing all suggestions, inventions, and scientific achievements that need a decision on the final award. If the suggestion is approved by the Air Force and the ANG/XPME SPM has negotiated a final award amount with the Air Force (AFMIA), the suggestion does not need to be reviewed by the Suggestion Awards Committee. The unit must pay the ANG share of the award. A fund citation will be forwarded for the Air Force portion of the award.

5.1.4. Include assisting the HRO SPM to resolve problem cases and disputed decisions when requested.

5.1.5. Include recommending awards to the awards approval authority (TAG or Unit Commander).

5.1.6. Include recommending job responsibility only when requested by the HRO SPM.

5.1.7. Include not changing evaluations completed by the office of primary responsibility (OPR). Will review suggestion awards based on the merits of the suggestion.

\*5.1.8. Include ensuring that their awards program provides for obligating funds consistent with applicable financial management controls and delegation of authority (5 C.F.R. 451.103(c)(1)).

**5.2. Awards Phase.** The Suggestion Awards Committee does not evaluate suggestions. The Committee does not get involved until the award phase; they are responsible for determining if the anticipated savings were realized. This is done for them on Air Force-approved suggestions by AFMIA/MIPP.

**5.3. Membership.** To expedite processing and reduce time required for committee meetings, a quorum may review and act on a suggestion (in writing) individually, without a formal committee meeting. A formal meeting will be required only when there is not a unanimous agreement to approve or disapprove an award or other problems are encountered that cannot be resolved without a meeting. A committee quorum consists of 3 voting members. The chairperson or alternate is considered a part of the quorum. The quorum should consist of at least one member who is qualified in the subject matter.

**PAUL A. WEAVER, JR.**  
**Major General, USAF**  
**Director, Air National Guard**

**OFFICIAL**

**DEBRA N. LARRABEE**  
**Colonel, USAF**  
**Chief, Support Group**

**Attachment**  
**References, Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Terms**

## Attachment REFERENCES, ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND TERMS

### *References*

DoD Instruction 1400.25-M	<i>DoD Civilian Personnel Manual, Dec 96</i>
AFI 51-303	<i>Intellectual Property-Patents, Patent Related Matters, Trademarks and Copyrights, Sep 98</i>
AFI 65-503	<i>US Air Force Cost and Planning Factors, Feb 94</i>
AFTO 00-5-1	<i>AF Technical Order System</i>
AFTO 00-25-195	<i>AF Technical Order Source Maintenance and Recoverability Coding of Air Force Weapons, Systems, and Equipment</i>
Standard Form 50-B	Notification of Personnel Action
Standard Form 1034	Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal
*AF Form 847	Recommendation for Change of Publication
AF Form 1000	Idea Application
AF Form 1000-1	Idea Evaluation and Transmittal
AF Form 1046	Zero Overpricing Challenges/Referrals
AF Form 1067	Modification Proposal
AF Technical Order Form 22	Technical Manual (TM) Change Recommendation and Reply
AF Technical Order Form 135	Source, Maintenance, and Recoverability Code Change Request
NGB Form 50	Award Certificate

### *Abbreviations and Acronyms*

ANG	Air National Guard
AGR	Active Guard/Reserve
DoD	Department of Defense
HRO	Human Resources Office
*JRD	Job Responsibility Determination
OPR	Office of Primary Responsibility
*SIR	Statutory Invention Registration
SPM	Suggestion Program Manager
UMD	Unit Manning Document
ZOP	Zero Overpricing

### *Terms*

Additional Award--Any award, or series of awards, paid in addition to and after the initial award.

\*After-the-Fact Suggestion--Suggestion presented formally or informally to management prior to submission of AF Form 1000.

\*Approval--A submission that has been evaluated and approved for implementation.

\*Approval/Disapproval Authority--Any evaluator who has the ability to implement a suggestion.

Award--Appropriate recognition for an approved and implemented suggestion.

Award Reconsideration--Suggester's request for additional review of the cash award amount or when no cash award was given.

\*Confirmatory Suggestion--Any suggestion resulting from an approved separate improvement process (e.g., AFTO Form 22/135), where ownership is established and tangible/intangible benefits are documented on the separate improvement process form. Approved separate improvement process form will be attached to AF Form 1000; no evaluation required.

Contribution--A suggestion, invention, patent, or scientific achievement.

\*Co-suggester--A member of a group or team who proposes a new or improved way of doing business.

Duplicate Suggestion--A suggestion that duplicates another suggested solution for which someone holds ownership rights.

\*Evaluation--A functional OPR's analysis of a contribution documented on an AF Form 1000-1.

Evaluator--An individual assigned by the functional OPR to analyze the contribution.

Extension--Written request to referring activity and originating suggestion office asking for additional time to evaluate or implement.

Final Action--Written notification of award action or disapproval.

\*Group/Team Suggestion--A suggestion that has two or more suggesters and is the result of their combined efforts.

Implementation--A contribution put into use by the OPR.

Initial Presentation--Presentation of a suggestion which starts the 30 day clock for confirmatory suggestions.

Intangible Benefits--Benefits which cannot be computed in specific monetary terms.

Invention--A new and useful process, machine manufacture, or composition of matter which may be patentable under patent laws of the United States.

\*Mandatory Adoption--Approved suggestion that must be put to use as directed by the approval authority.

\*Manpower Savings--Documented elimination of a manpower authorization from the Unit Manpower Document (UMD), documented overtime, and/or work backlog.

\*Optional Adoption--Approved suggestion that may or may not be used.

\*Ownership Period--Time period beginning when suggestion was submitted through one year after final approval/disapproval action.

\*Patent--A grant issued by the government, giving the owner the right to exclude all others from making, using, or selling the patented invention within the United States, its territories and possessions.

\*Reconsideration--A request for further evaluation on a previously evaluated suggestion, an award, or a job responsibility determination.

\*Reporting Official/Supervisor--Normally, supervisor of suggester who determines job responsibility; may also act as first-level evaluator.

Responsible Official--An individual at least one supervisory level above the evaluator who, by his or her signature on the AF Form 1000-1, ensures that the evaluation is valid, meets requirements of this directive, and is in the best interest of the Air National Guard.

\*Scientific Achievements--Scientific or technological accomplishment contributing to material advances of the armed services or an activity, group, project, or service to the public that was presented in a published article or presented.

\*Separate Improvement Process Documents--Forms used by other Air Force separate improvement programs (including, but not limited to, Technical Manual (TM) Change Recommendation and Reply (AFTO Form 22); Source, Maintenance, and Recoverability Code Change Request (AFTO Form 135); Zero-Overpricing Challenge/Referral (AF Form 1046)) that may be eligible for submission through the ANG Suggestion Program for evaluation and recognition..

\*Suggester--An individual who proposes a new or improved way of doing business.

\*Tangible Savings--Savings to the Government that can be measured in dollars.

Work Backlog--A documented progressive growth in backlog which exceeds the past average workload levels.

Work-hour Savings--Hours actually saved by reducing or eliminating overtime, or amount of time to complete a task covered by a labor standard.